

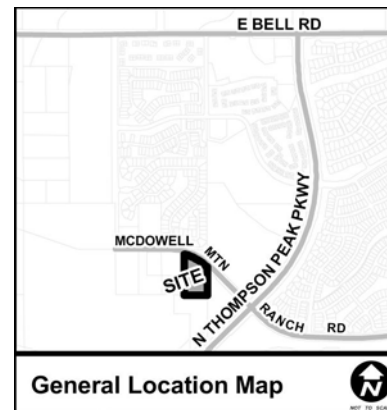
Planning Commission

Remote Hearing – August 24, 2005

10-GP-2005 General Plan Review

Introduction

Case 10-GP-2005 is a request for an amendment to the General Plan Land Use Element. The property is generally located on the south side of McDowell Mountain Ranch Road, ¼ mile west of Thompson Peak and includes approximately 4 acres of land. There is a concurrent rezoning case (16-ZN-2005) associated with this requested General Plan amendment.



Major General Plan Amendment

The Growing Smarter Acts (state statutes) required cities to establish criteria for major amendments to the General Plan. The Scottsdale City Council established the criteria for a major General Plan amendment in February 2001. Those criteria are a part of the city's General Plan, and include a land use change matrix, a property size criteria, and Character Area and Water/Wastewater Infrastructure criteria. (See attachment #7) If a proposed change meets any of the criteria, the proposal constitutes a major amendment to the General Plan. A land use change from Cultural / Institutional or Public Use to an Urban Neighborhoods designation is considered a major amendment, regardless of the size of the parcel.

Current Conditions/Background

This property, and the areas to the west are designated Cultural/Institutional on the General Plan Land Use Map. The Cultural/Institutional designation was placed in this area specifically to accommodate the Westworld facility and ancillary or support uses. The areas on the north side of McDowell Mountain Ranch Road are designated Suburban Neighborhoods, the property immediately to the east is designated Commercial. The Westworld equestrian center is to the south and west, the McDowell Mountain Ranch master planned community is to the east, and a mix of smaller subdivisions and non-residential uses (school facilities) are to the north and west. Current zoning for this property is R1-35.

The historic Old Verde Canal is a notable feature of affecting the site. Most of the property has a moderate density of vegetation. Areas upslope of the Old Verde Canal, subject from time to time to ponding of run-off have the greatest plant density. The vegetation on the property is predominantly naturally occurring and indigenous. With the exception of the Old Verde Canal and perimeter roadways, the site is largely undisturbed and has a natural desert character. The Verde Canal extends several miles northwest and southeast from the site and has been identified by area developers and by the city as both

a cultural resource, an environmental asset and as a linear open space feature connecting several neighborhoods, commercial centers and cultural/recreational facilities along its length. While a constraint in some respects, the feature represents a unique opportunity and is both an asset to the property and to the larger community.

No character area study has been approved, and no neighborhood plans have been proposed or completed for this area. The application site is within the designated ESL area and thus is subject to the accompanying regulations of the overlay regardless of the land-use category.

Description of Proposal

The proposed amendment is for the Land Use Element of the General Plan, from a Cultural/Institutional or Public Use designation to Urban Neighborhoods.

This application is adjacent to and contiguous with a second General Plan Amendment to Urban Neighborhoods, application case-number 10-GP- 2005. This adjacent site consists of approximately 3.92 acres and shares the same General Plan land use category and a current zoning of R1-35.

The Cultural/Institutional or Public Use land use category “includes a variety of public and private facilities including developed open space, government buildings, schools, private and public utilities, and airports. ...Some areas north of the CAP Canal may include a mixture of recreation, tourism, destination attractions, equestrian facilities, hotels or resorts, and cultural uses serving a large area.” The designation of Cultural/Institutional for this area of the city was mainly for the Westworld equestrian facilities to the south and west of this property. It was anticipated that this general area would include a mixture of uses focusing on the equestrian facilities, recreation, and tourism facilities supporting the Westworld complex.

The Urban Neighborhoods category “includes areas of multi-family dwellings/apartments. Densities in Urban Neighborhoods are usually more than eight dwellings per acre. These high-density uses are generally located near retail centers, offices, or other compatible non-residential uses. Care must be taken to minimize impacts on other residential areas and to provide adequate circulation to accommodate the traffic volumes. Access to transportation choices (e.g. pedestrian, bicycle, transit, etc.) is a key consideration for urban neighborhoods. Areas containing high-density residential development should have minimal environmental constraints.”

General Plan Analysis

Land Use Element:

The designation of Cultural/Institutional for this area of the city was established mainly for the Westworld equestrian facilities to the south and west of this property. It was originally anticipated that this general area would include a mixture of uses focusing on the equestrian facilities, recreation, and tourism facilities supporting the Westworld complex. Westworld has indicated that it does not intend to expand its facility onto this site. The applicants are requesting the site be used for high-density residential uses.

Land Use Element Goals speak to integrating the land uses into the surrounding physical and natural environments, the neighborhood setting, and the neighborhood itself. This can be achieved through transitions to help integrate into surrounding neighborhoods, and promoting development patterns and standards that are consistent with the surrounding uses and reinforce the area's character. The location of this property is unique, it is surrounded by a variety of land uses, and it is adjacent to a primary developed equestrian facility, providing amenities for both visitors and residents. It is important to consider the proximity of the McDowell Mountain Ranch subdivision to the north and the east, for potential impacts from increased residential intensity.

Character and Design Element:

One of the Goals of this Element is to make sure that all development is consistent and appropriate in terms of community goals, surrounding areas character, and the specific neighborhoods. Another Goal is to identify and preserve the city's historic, archaeological and cultural resources. The Old Verde Canal is one of those identified resources and should be preserved through the development process.

Uses and Activities of the Westworld Cultural Center, such as those directly related to horse feeding, maintenance, and impacts created by large scale special events may not be compatible with direct adjacency of future residential units; it is important to consider adequate buffering for potential adverse sights and sounds and a design that promotes integration with the adjacent neighborhoods.

Housing Element:

This Element discusses seeking housing options that blend with the character of the surrounding community. Physical design, building structure, and lot layout relationships should help new development complement the surrounding neighborhoods.

Preservation and Environmental Planning:

The area is located within the Lower Desert Landform of the ESL Ordinance and will require the dedication of Natural Area Open Space. Future development of this site should take into account the Old Verde Canal, which has been identified as a historical/archeological resource for the City of Scottsdale. This recognition of the Verde Canal has resulted in the preservation of large portions of the Canal feature in the site planning and development of other properties in the area. A similar response is expected in development of this property.

Cost of Development Element:

The city of Scottsdale has long held the philosophy that new development should "pay for itself" and not burden existing residents and property owners with the provision of infrastructure and public services and facilities. The developer of the project will be responsible for much of any necessary infrastructure improvements to accommodate the demand generated by the new uses.

Key Issues

- The Land Use designation of Cultural/Institutional is not deemed necessary for the city's Westworld facility.
- Proximity to the McDowell Mountain Ranch community will require that land uses are compatible and traffic circulation and other planning and land use issues are mitigated.
- Uses and activities of Westworld may impact and not be compatible with adjacent residential uses and care should be taken in the development of this site to mitigate these impacts.
- The Old Verde Canal should be preserved in the development process, consistent with other developments along the length of the Canal.

Community Involvement

A Neighborhood Open House was held on August 11, 2005 at Horizon Park Center following notification by mail to 161 property owners and interested citizens, mostly situated within a 1,500 foot radius of the site. Arizona State Land Department and McDowell Mountain Ranch Community Association were also notified. In addition, a Project Under Consideration sign was posted on the site on July 25, 2005 advising of the time and location of the Neighborhood Open House meeting. Nine (9) people attended the meeting, 6 of which signed a petition of support. Generally attendees wished to obtain more information of the proposal and were supportive of the use for Urban Neighborhoods rather than an industrial use. One neighbor commented that building height should be limited to 2 stories or approximately 26 feet. A summary of the citizen comments is provided in Attachment #6. Staff has received one letter of objection from a resident representing the Horseman's Park subdivision Architectural Committee indicating concern related to the increased traffic and density of the project.

Conclusion

This proposed General Plan amendment is consistent with the character, land use intensity, and goals for future development in this area of the city and, if developed sensitively, will not have a negative impact on surrounding neighborhoods or neighboring land uses. The Westworld complex does not need this area to be maintained as Cultural/Institutional. Urban Neighborhood uses could provide adequate transition and a buffer from the diverse uses and activities of Westworld's Cultural/Institutional designation to surrounding residential lower intensity uses.

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Approved by:

Randy Grant
Chief Planning Officer

Attachments:

1. Applicant's Project Narrative
2. Context Aerial
3. Close-up Aerial
4. Existing General Plan Land Use Map
5. Conceptual General Plan Land Use Map
6. Community Input
7. Major General Plan Amendment Criteria

Request for General Plan Amendment for:

The Thomas Property

Scottsdale, Arizona

Project No: 247-PA-05
Case No: 10-GP-05
Project coordinator: Al Ward
Owner: Judy A. Thomas Trust
Applicant Contact: John G. Thomas (480) 948-3590
Submitted: April 22, 2005
Revised: June 15, 2005

INTRODUCTION.

Request. Amend the General Plan – Land Use Element for the subject property from “Cultural/Institutional” to “Urban Neighborhoods.” Supplemental material on each shall be submitted at a later date with guidance from the project coordinator.

Location. The subject property is located at 9975 McDowell Mountain Ranch Rd, approximately one-quarter mile west of Thompson Peak Parkway on the south side of McDowell Mountain Ranch Road generally northeast of Westworld. The site is within the Horeseman’s Park East PCD Area. The site is not within McDowell Mountain Ranch.

Site Conditions. The approximately 4 acre site is generally level with a non-functioning wash running through and the Old Verde Canal bisecting the property. Native vegetation is found predominantly around the canal and includes saguaro and cholla cactus, mesquite and palo verde trees.

Surrounding Land Uses. The subject property is in a unique location within the City of Scottsdale surrounded by a variety of land uses including Westworld to the southwest, McDowell Mountain Ranch master planned community to the east and a mix of residential and employment uses to the north and west.

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT CHECKLIST.

The following items are provided pursuant to the “Checklist” items submitted by the project coordinator at the preapplication meeting, and “30 Day Letter” received from the project coordinator on May 26th, 2005.

Item 1 – General Plan Amendment (GPA) Checklist.
[Submitted with application]

Item 2 – Completed Application Form.

[Submitted with application]

Item 3 – GPA Application Fee.

[Submitted with application]

Item 4 – GPA Neighborhood Involvement Program.

The following is an outline of the proposed Neighborhood Involvement Program as defined in the GPA checklist: 1) letter/mailed notice, 2) project under consideration sign, 3) open house meeting(s).

Item 5 – Context Graphics, Plans & Photographs in Relation to Surrounding Properties.

See enclosed photographs. An aerial photograph depicting the subject in relation to the surrounding properties is also enclosed.

Item 6 – Context Graphics and/or Tables.

- a. Existing General Plan Land Use, transportation, character, and/or open space for the subject and surrounding properties.
- b. Graphic 2: Proposed General Plan designation(s) for the subject property and all existing General Plan designations that will remain. *“Urban Neighborhoods.”* Total acreage of the General Plan designation(s) being proposed: *[approximately 3.9 acres]*.

Item 7 – Narrative Description, Analysis and Justification for Support.

Character and Lifestyle. The future development plan will be a quality design and will be an exceptional place to either work or reside, depending upon the ultimate use. In order to further the preservation of Scottsdale’s unique southwestern character, the plan will also consider the relocation of and utilization of the Old Verde Canal to be incorporated into the trail system proposed the City of Scottsdale.

Land Use and Compatibility. The applicant is justified in applying for its change of use because virtually every other use surrounding Westworld is urban neighborhoods. There are currently no other single family residences or land not currently under application for GP Amendment that border Westworld.

Either the urban neighborhood use adequately transition the more intense use of Westworld to the south, the City of Scottsdale operated events and entertainment venue. McDowell Mountain Ranch Road and the SR zoning to the north of the subject is a buffer to either of Thomas’ proposed uses. The vacant land adjacent to the subject’s eastern boundary is currently zoned PCOC, a retail/commercial type use that wraps around the gasoline station and convenience store on the west corner of Thompson Peak Parkway and McDowell Mountain Ranch Rd – normally a transitional use would border this type of property, not single family

homes. The State Land adjacent to the subject's southern boundry is scheduled for public auction in the Fall of 2005 – a recent public appraisal concludes with substantial analysis that the highest and best use of the state land is multi-family residential (urban neighborhoods). The land to the west and south of the subject is currently under application for GP Amendment for uses similar to the subject.

Compatibility: If developed today, the subject parcel has a current zoning which would allow for approximately 1 home per acre - not a land use that is not compatible with 5 of the 6 immediately adjacent uses. The current zoning is a carryover from the former county zoning prior to the City's annexation of the property many years ago. The factors that have occurred since are: 1) the implementation and expansion of Westworld from a local and community equestrian facility into a regional and national events and entertainment venue, promoting private enterprise as an economic venture, 2) the creation of such transportation corridors such as Thompson Peak Parkway, McDowell Mountain Ranch Road, and the 101 Freeway, 3) the development of the industrial centers along the northwestern and southwestern borders of Westworld, 4) the development of multi-family residential development along the subject's entire southern boundry and along Westworld's planned northern border, as well as directly northeast of the subject site, and 5) the planned development of the Aquatic Center.

The land use designation of "*urban neighborhoods*" is compatible with other uses in the neighborhood, striking a balance between the uses of Westworld and other residential uses. Such use is found directly to the northeast of the subject, and along virtually the entire southern border of Westworld, along the northern planned border, and northeast of the subject.

Economic Vitality and Future City Growth.

Moreover, the urban neighborhood use will add high quality housing stock to the neighborhood at relative affordability, and thus more high quality residents to stimulate economic activity through consumer or small business activity.

The proposed amendment to *urban neighborhoods* enhances and protects neighborhoods and ensures and sustains their quality of life by creating a safe, clean, and visually attractive environment for families to thrive in relative affordability. The change to urban neighborhoods positively affects and implements the neighborhood's character by creating additional neighbors who will share its vision at a density compatible with other uses surrounding Westworld. The plan will allow alternate modes of transportation for local residents/employees as well as enhance the landscape and architectural character established by residential and non-residential uses.

Open Space. In order to promote harmony with the natural desert surroundings, the applicant recognizes that the site is within an ESL designated area and provides for certain NAOS requirements. Further, the plan will also consider the relocation of and utilization of the Old Verde Canal to be incorporated into the trail system proposed the City of Scottsdale.

Sustainability. This is an ideal site for multimodal transportation and use of established infrastructure improvements due to the fact that most of the area infrastructure is already in place. In order to mitigate concerns that Westworld may have regarding the *urban neighborhoods* use, the applicant would stipulate to issuing proper disclosures to prospective residents of the project.

Transportation.

The *urban neighborhood* use offers predictability in peak use trips with moderate activities throughout the day and on weekends. Both uses will provide an opportunity for employees/residents to walk or bicycle to and from the site.

Item 8 – Land Use Impact Analysis.

*The *urban neighborhoods* use will have a positive impact by providing a transition between Westworld and the single family and multi-family uses in the neighborhood, and will have the future benefit of sustainable high quality housing stock for Scottsdale.

The following is a land use impact analysis between the existing and proposed General Plan designation utilizing the city's "Clean Zone Model" computer analysis.

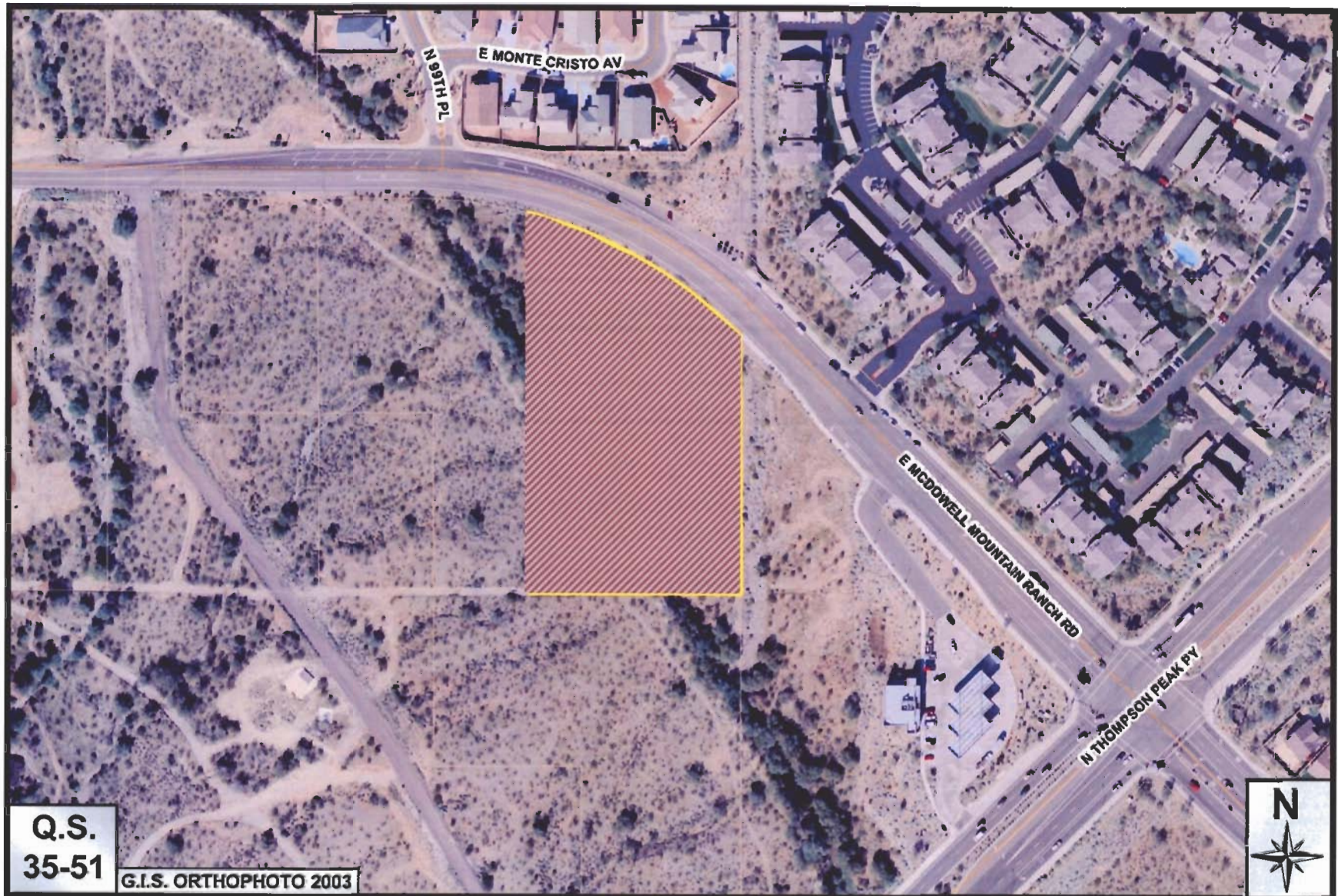
	Existing Cult/Inst	Proposed Multi-Family Residential
Dwelling Units	---	82
Floor Area	25,000 SqFt	69,696***
Population	---	133
School Children	---	35
Water Use	3 Acre Ft/Yr	47
Wastewater	1 Acre Ft/Yr	16
Solid Waste	4 Tons/Yr	110
Vehicle Trips	80/Day	883*
Employees	6	3****

* Note that a T.I.M.A study will be prepared for this proposal as part of the future rezoning request(s).

** Based on a Floor Area Ratio of 30%.

*** Based on a Floor Area Ratio of 40% Maximum for Horeseman's Park East PCD Area as provided by Project Coordinator.

**** Clean Zone Model provides for 98 employees which applicant believes may be a technical error.

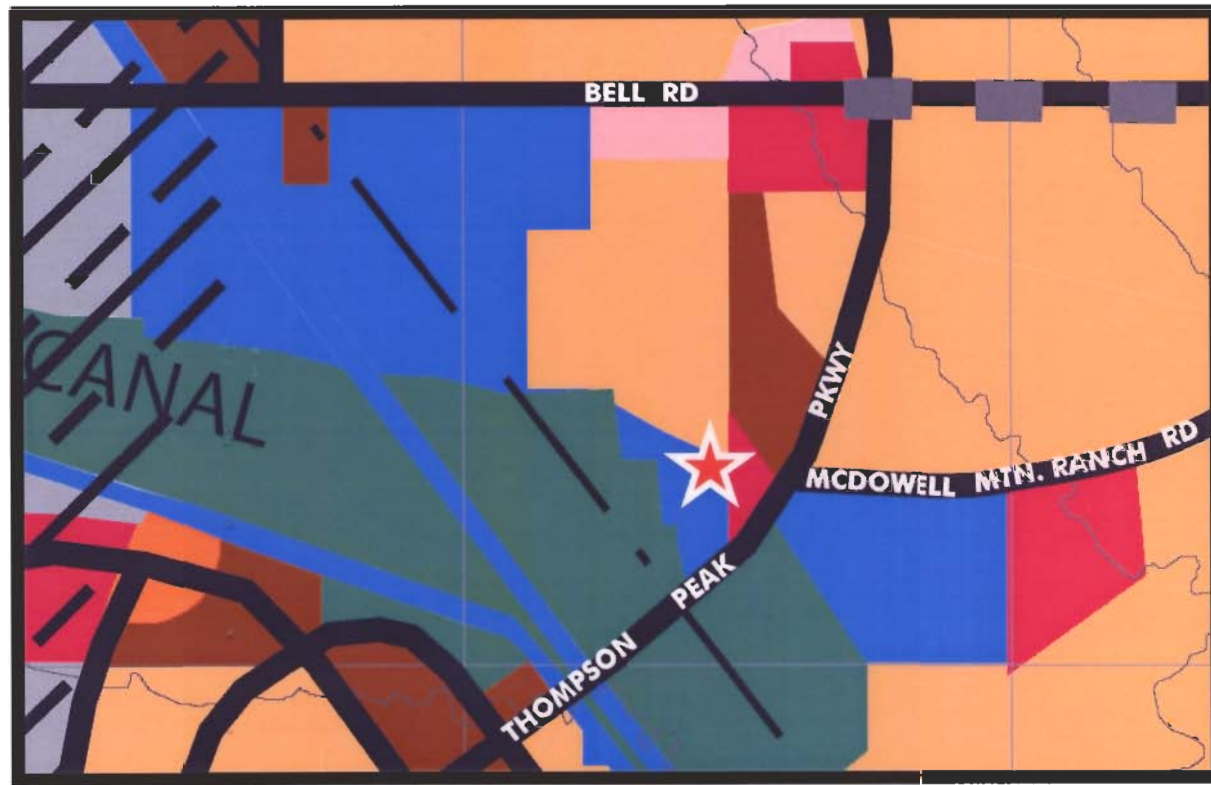


Equestria Villas

10-GP-2005

ATTACHMENT #3

General Plan (Existing)

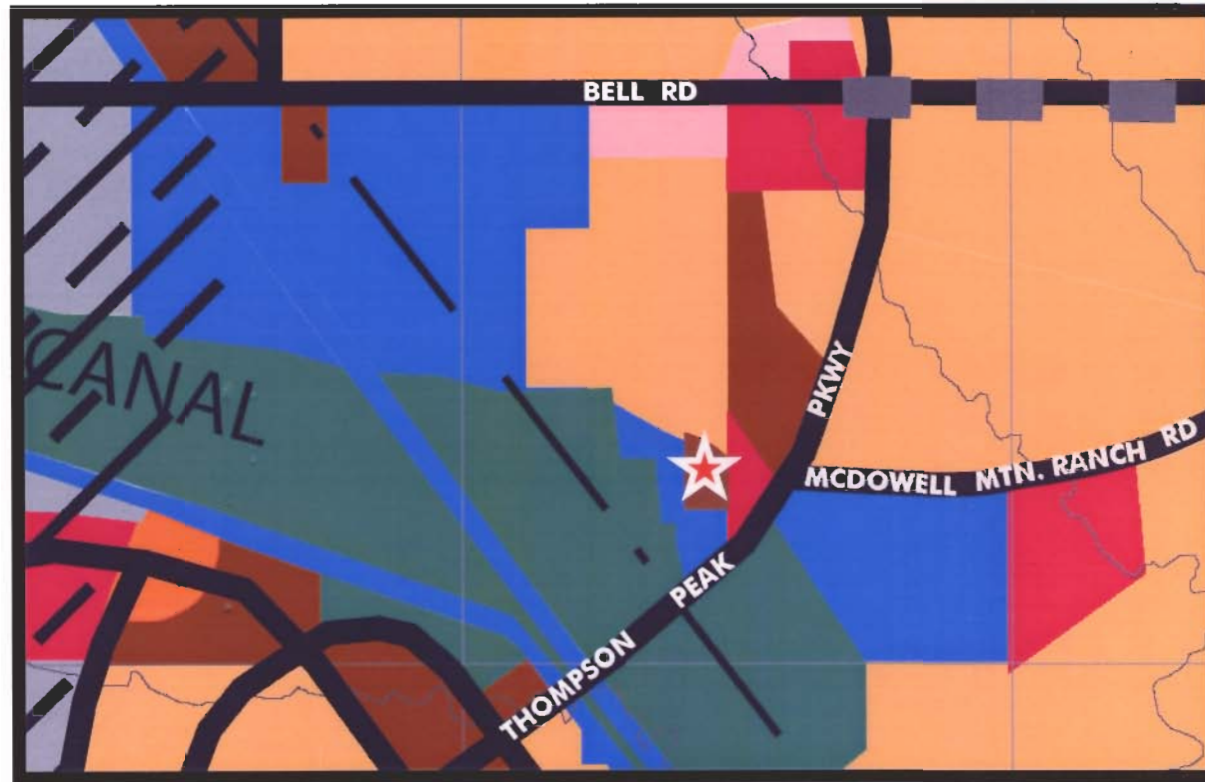


10-GP-2005

Adopted by City Council October 30, 2001
 Ratified by Scottsdale voters March 12, 2002
 revised to show McDowell Sonoran Preserve as of May 2004
 revised to reflect General Plan amendments through June 2004

ATTACHMENT #4

General Plan (Proposed)



10-GP-2005

ATTACHMENT #5

Adopted by City Council October 30, 2001.
 Ratified by Scottsdale voters March 12, 2002.
 revised to show McDowell Sonoran Preserve as of May 2004
 revised to reflect General Plan amendments through June 2004

Attachment #6 Citizen Involvement

The above attachment is on file at the City of
Scottsdale Current Planning office,
7447 E Indian School Road, Suite 105.

Criteria for a Major Amendment to the 2001 Scottsdale General Plan

(City Council approved 10/30/01)

Scottsdale's Mission: In guiding the formation of the major amendment criteria, it is important to consider the major mission elements of the city, these being –

- a. Preserve Scottsdale's unique southwestern character,
- b. Plan for and manage growth in harmony with the natural desert surroundings,
- c. Promote the livability of the community,
- d. Enhance and protect neighborhoods, and
- e. Ensure and sustain the quality of life for all residents and visitors.

Proposed changes to the land use element of the city's General Plan that compromise the spirit and intent of these mission statements will qualify for consideration as a major amendment to the General Plan.

Scottsdale's Land Use Element: It is important that as proposals are considered in regard to the following criteria that the values and structure of the land use element be used as a guide. These values are an important part of the city's land use plan:

- a. Land uses should respect the natural and man-made environment,
- b. Land uses should provide for an unsurpassed quality of life for both its citizens and visitors,
- c. Land uses should contribute to the unique identity that is Scottsdale,
- d. Land uses should contribute to the building of community unity and cohesiveness,
- e. Land uses should work in concert with transportation systems in order to promote choice and reduce negative impacts upon the lifestyle of citizens and the quality of the environment,
- f. Land uses should be balanced in order to allow for the community to provide adequate live, work and play opportunities, and
- g. Land uses should provide opportunities for the design of uses to fit and respect the character, scale and quality of uses that exist in the community.

It is recognized that a proposed change of land uses within any given portion of the city may have a substantial impact upon the balance of land uses within the city as a whole. The General Plan Land Use Element was formulated and adopted with full consideration of the character and balance of land uses that are appropriate within all distinct areas of the city. Beyond this level of consideration, the plan considers the relationships between and among the various planning areas and studies that have helped to build the plan. This leads to a balance and pattern of land uses that reflects the community's values, aspirations and the city's stated mission.

Character of Land Uses: A change in the planned land uses may have a substantial impact upon the city by transforming the character of the land uses within a given planning area. The character of the land uses may be indicated by the physical intensity of the use in terms of massing, height or relationships between uses; the blending of different types of uses and the patterns and scale inherent to each; or the relative amount, type and placement of open spaces. Significant changes in the established land use character will be considered in determining whether or not a proposal is a major amendment.

Criteria: An amendment to the Land Use Element of Scottsdale's General Plan shall be defined as a major amendment if it meets any one of the following criteria:

1. Change in Land Use Category

A change in the land use category on the land use plan that changes the land use character from one type to another as delineated in the following table:

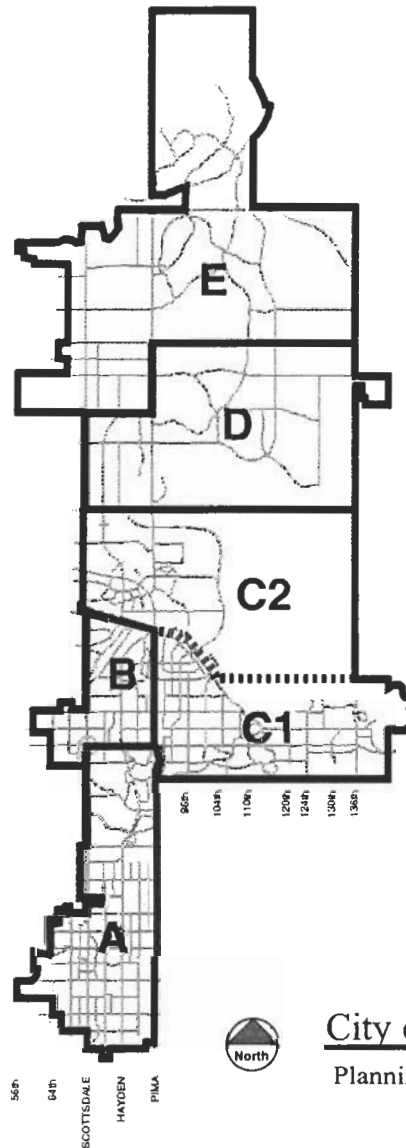
	To:	Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D	Group E
<i>From:</i>	Land Use Plan Category					
Group A	Rural Neighborhoods Natural Open Space		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Group B	Suburban Neighborhoods Developed Open Space Cultural/ Institutional or Public Use			Yes	Yes	Yes
Group C	Urban Neighborhoods Resorts/Tourism	Yes				Yes
Group D	Neighborhood Commercial Minor Office Minor Employment	Yes	Yes			Yes
Group E	Commercial Office Employment Mixed Use Regional Use Overlay	Yes	Yes			

2a. Area of Change Criteria

A change in the land use designation that includes the following gross acreages:

- * Planning Zones A, B 10 acres or more
- * Planning Zone C1, C2, D and E 15 acres or more

JENNY LYNN
CIRCLE MOUNTAIN
HONDA BOW
ROCKAWAY HILLS
DESERT HILLS
JOY RANCH
STAGECOACH PASS
CAREFREE HWY
DOVE VALLEY
LONE MOUNTAIN
DIXLETA
DYNAMITE
JOMAX
HAPPY VALLEY
PINNACLE PEAK
DEER VALLEY
BEARDSLEY
OUTER LOOP
FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT BLVD
GREENWAY
THUNDERBIRD
SWEETWATER
CACTUS
CHOLLA
SHEA
DOUBLETREE RANCH
McCORMICK
INDIAN BEND
McDONALD
CHAPARRAL
CAMELBACK
INDIAN SCHOOL
THOMAS
McDOWELL
McKELLIPS



ZONE A includes the Downtown Business/Entertainment District and the most mature neighborhoods in the community

ZONE B includes the Scottsdale Airpark, the fastest growing and one of the three largest employment centers in the metropolitan area

ZONE C covers the East Shea area, McDowell Mountain Ranch, DC Ranch, and Greyhawk, all major master planned developments (C1 & C2 are divided by the CAP Canal and Thunderbird Road)

ZONE D encompasses the Pinnacle Peak, Desert Highlands and Troons communities, and large undeveloped tracts

ZONE E includes Terra Vita, the Boulders, Desert Mountain, Legend Trails, the 15,000-acre tract of State Trust Lands, and other undeveloped lands

City of Scottsdale
Planning Zones

2b. *Acreage Criteria Overriding Incentives*

Certain exceptions to these criteria (2a.) are considered to be in the interest of the general public and in keeping with the mission and values of the community. A proposal that includes any of the following conditions will not be considered as a major amendment:

- A property owner initiated decrease in the residential land use category of units planned by the land use element, or
- A proposal for a change in the land use designation that results in no increase in the planned number of dwelling units and includes at least 30% more Natural Area Open Space than is required by the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Ordinance for the property and that is:
 - of substantial size, that being at least seven or more contiguous acres, and protected in such a manner so as to be designated with the land use category of Natural Area Open Space
 - and where such open space protects sensitive natural features and is visually and/or physically accessible to the general public and does not include lands contained within scenic corridors or vista corridors, or
- A proposal to change the land use category to Cultural/ Institutional with a municipal, public school or non-profit cultural facility when such a proposed facility is not adjacent to a single-family land use designation (Rural or Suburban Neighborhoods) or does not share direct access to any street that has single-family residential driveway access within one half (1/2) mile of the proposal.
- A proposal within the Downtown Plan area that maintains the same development standards type (e.g. Type 1, Type 1.5 or Type 2) and contains no more than fifteen (15) gross acres or less.

3. *Character Area Criteria*

Character areas have been added to the city's planning process in order to recognize and maintain the unique physical, visual and functional conditions that occur in distinct areas across the community. The city recognizes that these form a context that is important to the lifestyle, economic well being and long term viability of the community. These areas are identified by a number of parameters including but not limited to building scale, open space types and patterns, age of development and topographic setting.

If a proposal to change the land use category has not been clearly demonstrated by the applicant to comply with the guidelines and standards embodied within an approved character area plan it will be considered as a major amendment. (Note: The character area plans that qualify for consideration as of November, 2000 include the Desert Foothills Plan, Dynamite Foothills Plan, Cactus Corridor Plan and Downtown Plan.)

4. *Water/Wastewater Infrastructure Criteria*

If a proposal to change the planned land use category results in the premature increase in the size of a master planned water transmission or sewer collection facility it will qualify as a major amendment.

If a project applicant wishes to appeal the designation of a General Plan major amendment, the Comprehensive Planning Division Planning Director, or the position equivalent, will evaluate the appeal and make a major amendment determination.